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## **Children's Services Scrutiny Committee – 9<sup>th</sup> September 2020**

### **Report of the Acting Director of Children's Services**

#### **Summer provision and September school update**

##### **Purpose**

1. To provide Members with the following:
  - an overview of summer provision in Dudley during 2020.
  - an analysis of secondary and college provision.
  - an analysis of Virtual School events.
  - an analysis of the Dudley Performing Arts (DPA) events.
  - a summary of the Local Authorities support for schools in September 2020
  - (Please note that this report was completed in mid-August).

##### **Recommendations**

2. To recommend the following:
  - That Members note the content of the report.
  - That Members suggest any areas they may wish to scrutinise with respect to support for schools in September 2020.

##### **Background**

###### **Overview of summer provision in Dudley during 2020**

3. Across the summer, we co-ordinated and ran a wide range of programmes, with the overall aim of supporting our children and young people to return to school in September.
4. Six primary schools were open, with Howley Grange and Newfield Park running 5 weeks of sport; Hurst Green operating for up to 4 weeks of sport; Jesson's C of E providing a mixture of literacy, numeracy and sport; Milking Bank targeting their vulnerable pupils, and Withymoor running a 4-week sports club.

5. At the same time, our secondary schools and colleges were supporting young people and adults in Dudley who have been, or will be, affected by COVID-19. In particular they were focussing on;
  - Year 11 leavers who had not indicated any destination.
  - Young people with SEND.
  - Year 12 students who were wavering with their courses.
  - Year 13 students who would ordinarily be going to Higher Education but were not happy to pay fees and be based at home.
  - Residents currently unemployed.
  - Residents newly unemployed due to COVID-19 and those likely to become unemployed after funding for furloughing staff was stopped
  
6. We have also been working with the Shireland Collegiate Academy Trust on a project called Eduu.School, which is an online programme to support disadvantaged Year 10 children in local authorities in Birmingham and the Black Country during the period of limited school access. It is free of charge to Dudley Schools and, further to the demonstrations which took place at the start of July 2020, several of our mainstream and special schools enrolled their pupils.
  
7. Dudley Virtual School also delivered a range of provision, including;
  - The Challenge Tuition Programme
  - Artslink Awesome Arts Programme
  - Literacy & Numeracy Programme - Spy School 2020 - The Lockdown Legend
  - Careers – Be Inspired
  
8. Then, finally, Dudley Performing Arts organised two weeks of events, again targeted at children and young people who were likely to find it difficult to re-engage with school in September.
  
9. The first week was based at Resonance, with the second being hosted by the Black Country Museum, as shown below;

Tuesday 4th August 09:00 – 09:30 arrivals, session ends 14:30	Drumming for KS2 Bubble B	15 places (KS2)
Tuesday 4th August 09:30 – 10:00 arrivals, session ends 15:00	Band in a week, Day one Bubble E	16 places (KS3/4) Same group throughout
Wednesday 5th August 09:00 – 09:30 arrivals, session ends 14:30	Drumming for KS2/ 3 Bubble C	15 places (KS2)
Wednesday 5th August 09:30 – 10:00 arrivals, session ends 15:00	Band in a week, Day two Bubble E	16 places (KS3/4) Same group throughout



Thursday 6th August 09:00 – 09:30 arrivals, session ends 14:30	Drumming for KS2/ 4 Bubble D	15 places (KS2)
Thursday 6th August 09:30 – 10:00 arrivals, session ends 15:00	Band in a week, Day three Bubble E	16 places (KS3/4) same group throughout
Friday 7th 09:30 – 10:00 arrivals, session ends 15:00	Band in a week, Final day Bubble E	16 places (KS3/4) same group throughout
Monday 10th August 09:30 – 10:00 arrivals, session ends 15:00	KS2 Day Bubble F	15 places (KS2)
Tuesday 11th August 09:30 – 10:00 arrivals, session ends 15:00	KS3/4 Day Bubble G	15 places (KS3/4)
Tuesday 11th August 09:30 – 10:00 arrivals, session ends 15:00	KS2 Day Bubble H	15 places (KS2)
Wednesday 12th August 09:30 – 10:00 arrivals, session ends 15:00	KS3/4 Day Bubble I	15 places (KS2)
Thursday 13th August 09:30 – 10:00 arrivals, session ends 15:00	Glass and Crafts Bubble J	15 places (KS2)

## Analysis of secondary and college provision

### **Year 11 engagement**

#### 10. SEN

Multi agency meetings took place on Microsoft Teams for young people with Education, Health and Care Plans, including closer working with SEN case officers and transitions Social Workers. Work has also been undertaken with the special schools to establish Post 16 and Post 19 outcomes, and to follow up any actions from SEN and High Cost Funding Panel, in order to obtain support.

#### 11. Information, advice, guidance and support for young people

Staff have continued their support to the vulnerable group clients: home educated, children missing education and alternative provision. Twitter, Facebook and the Connexions website were used to advise on next steps, opportunities and update with relevant information.

12. Staff also worked closely with the Careers Enterprise Council to provide information to careers leaders in schools, young people and parents/carers on year 11 and post 16 transitions.

13. In addition, they worked with national organisations for apprenticeships to gain an understanding of the opportunities that could be available for young people, as well as

sourcing online resources with information about CV completion, guidance for young people and parents, and interviewing skills.

14. Staff also engaged with managers and practitioners to understand the concerns of SEND, Children in Care and Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) as a part of being able to offer support during and post COVID 19. There was also engagement with education psychology to explore wellbeing support that could be offered.
15. Conversations also took place with training providers to gain an understanding as to how applications are managed during this period, to ensure young people are still being offered places and to ensure that young people can start programmes.

### **Further Education College engagement**

#### 16. Dudley College

To encourage new students, Dudley College put on a number of events, many of which were recorded and available online for anyone who missed them.

#### **Appendix 1 - Dudley College - Summer Programme aimed at new students**

17. The college anticipates that thousands of young people and parents will have engaged with these activities before the start of the new term, with the events being accessed via their website (<https://www.dudleycol.ac.uk/Update>).
18. To support continuing students, the college focussed on completed technical students who were not awarded their qualification or their calculated grade. These include mainly technical qualifications where practical assessments and delivery is required, such as construction, engineering and motor vehicle courses. Since the college reopened on June 15th, it has put on a series of assessment activities (<https://www.dudleycol.ac.uk/Information-for-Technical-Assessments>). Attendance has been excellent and the college expected to have all of these assessments completed by the end of the summer.

### **Black Country Impact Programme**

#### 19. Update on referrals and tenders for BC Impact support programmes

Between the start of lockdown and the end of June the team received 15 referrals, with a further 12 in July. Of the new referrals, 10 are engaging in essential skills programmes and counselling. With limited Department for Work and Pensions access, the upturn in referrals is organic as opposed to referrals direct from Jobcentre Plus.

20. The following is a list of the latest tenders on the Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS), as of 1 August 2020.

Name	Number of opportunities	Achievement	Restrictions
Railtrack	36	All licences and registrations to work on the railways	18+
Essential Skills	20	English/Maths or ICT Qualifications	
Gas Engineering	10	Qualified Gas Engineer	18+
College Transition	150	Support for YR11 students to transition to college	
Hair Level 1	10	Hair level 1 qualification	
Painting and Decorating	10	Level 2 P&D - CSCS card	
Engineering Tasters	100	Introduction and work experience tasters	
SIA and CCTV	20	SIA door license and CCTV operator	18+
Warehousing (and FLT)	50	Level 2 warehousing (and option for FLT license)	
Counselling	30		
Street works	5	Licenses and registration for street works	18+
Electrical Installation	10	Electrical Installation level 1	
LGV driver	15	Licensed to drive LGV	

#### 21. Year 11 leavers and SEN

The colleges took the decision not to engage with BC Impact to deliver the post school summer transition programme due to restrictions linked to lockdown and the change to remote learning which made delivery of tasters difficult. This meant we didn't start working on this until early June, whereas previously this would have commenced in March for delivery in July.

22. The contract is now in place and being delivered by Phase Trust, with 26 young people registered to date, including 5 SEN learners. Take-up is currently low with respect to previous years, which is to be expected due to Covid-19, but the programme is being promoted via letters to parents, which were sent out across the borough and on social media channels.

#### 23. Further SEN support

Discussions are underway to create a SEN-centric employment programme for those who are deemed to be 'work ready'. The idea is to gain actual work experience placements that can progress to employment or lead straight into employment.



24. The team is re-engaging with Riverside House on their ongoing community project. Previously we worked with them in 2017-18, with a programme to remove the bush and brambles from the site ready for the ongoing construction. We now have the major construction works completed, so our learners can return to Riverside House.
25. At Lunch on the Run we have had a few young people obtain food hygiene qualifications, and we are now trying to get the provider DPS approved, as they offer a great service to young people with SEN.
26. Work Experience  
Finally, we are working with Brockwood Animal Sanctuary to access work experience placements but are at a very early stage of tender development as the company also needs to be DPS approved. We are planning a two-week work experience programme to provide animal care and, site and pen maintenance courses. These are ideal for young people who wish to work outdoors on various activities.

### **Analysis of Virtual School events**

27. As part of the Virtual School's summer provision, the following numbers of pupils engaged in the Challenge Tuition Programme:

<b>Key Stage</b>	<b>Numbers</b>
1 and 2	6
3	8
4	20 – including 10 leading to Functional Skills qualifications

28. Numbers for the Be Inspired careers programme and the ArtsLink Awesome Arts Festival were not available at the time of writing this report.
29. The Connect & Create Artslink website has generated 94 new users, spread across 124 sessions, since the start of lockdown.

### **Analysis of the DPA events**

30. The attendance data needs to be read in the context of the programme very deliberately targeting pupils who were identified by their schools as being likely to have issues re-engaging in September.
31. With such a cohort, it is therefore important to focus on the % that did attend, as opposed to the % that did not.
32. Where pupils did not attend this was often due to the anxieties of parents and carers, who were aware at the time of government communications about a possible second

wave of Covid-19, and associated articles in the media about whether schools would be safe in September.

33. However, the vast majority of pupils who attended had a really positive experience.
34. Many of the younger children looked anxious on arrival but were smiling by lunch time. One said she had enjoyed the food and asked if she could eat all day!
35. The older pupils also said they were nervous before coming, partly because they didn't know what to expect. However, they returned on successive days, growing in confidence. One told a member of staff that they would recommend the event to their friends if it was held again next year.
36. C said that all she has been doing since lockdown was colouring and this was something new. She was very nervous on day one, but was more confident on day two, when staff saw her smile for the first time.
37. E now wants to be a musician.
38. A parent also contacted us to say;
39. 'Please pass on our thanks to the team today. F had a great time today. She says the staff were kind and helpful and that she had lots of fun. She now wants music lessons and to join a band.'
40. It is therefore very clear that the programme did exactly what it set out to; making those who attended more confident and, as a result, more likely to re-engage with school in September.
41. A video produced by the DPA team of the summer programme was sent to you prior to this meeting.

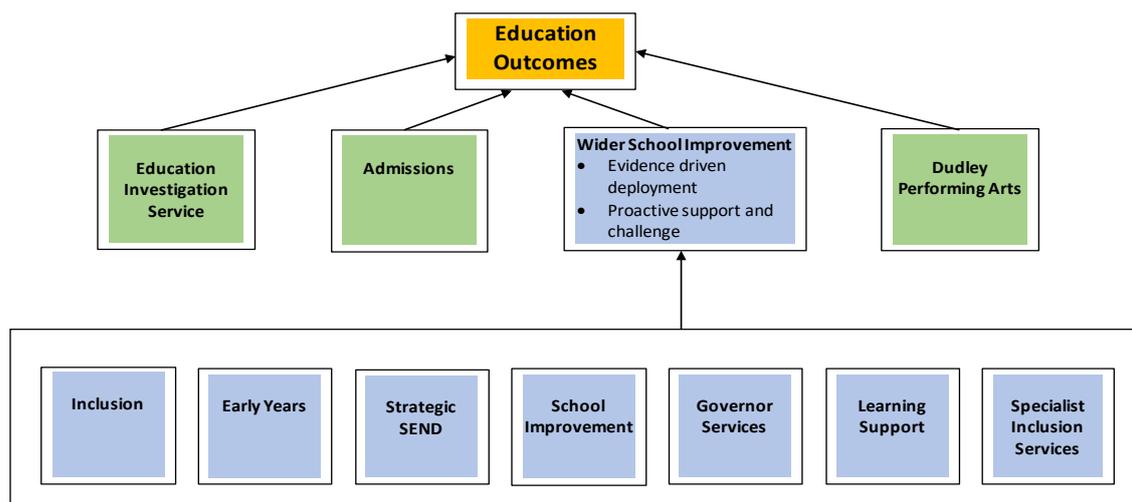
Date	No. of places	No. of pupils attending	Attendance %
Monday 3 August	15	Pupils reallocated to other days	
Tuesday 4 August	31	9	29%
Wednesday 5 August	31	11	35%
Thursday 6 August	31	12	39%
Friday 7 August	16	8	50%
Monday 10 August	15	3	20%
Tuesday 11 August	15	9	60%
Wednesday 12 August	15	8	54%
Thursday 13 August	15	8	54%



## **Summary of the LA's support for schools in September 2020**

42. In order to support and challenge all our schools in September, we are introducing six key principles as part of an overall education strategy for Dudley MBC.
43. These are;
- As a borough we take full responsibility for ensuring that all our children and young people have high quality education, which meets their individual needs and aspirations
  - We expect all our schools and academies to be fully inclusive
  - We are working to ensure that there is clear continuity between mainstream schools, bases, alternative provision and special schools
  - We are committed to reducing exclusions, and the movement of children and young people between our schools and academies
  - As a local authority we will ensure that our teams are fully co-ordinated, and that we work proactively to provide schools and academies with the support and challenge they need
  - We will communicate regularly with all our schools and academies, and expect them to keep up to date with the information we provide
44. These principles will underpin all our work with schools and provide internal coherence to other strategies and initiatives which will be rolled out across the year. It is crucial that schools can see that Dudley has a clear educational philosophy and direction of travel.
45. We are also committed to working more proactively, to drive both the improvement and inclusion agendas. To date, far too much of our work has been reactive and driven by the need to respond to events, as opposed to having a clear set of joined up plans.
46. To support this new way of working, we are re-organising the Education Outcomes team, again with the objective of ensuring internal coherence to all that we do. We need to be seen as more credible by schools, if they are to have the confidence to work with us, and more focused team-working is a vital part of this. In simple terms, each member of the team needs to know what the others are doing, so that our work is fully integrated where it matters, in schools.
47. As shown in the communication structure below, all our work will be co-ordinated in relation to the school improvement priorities of individual schools, with specific teams being deployed to support and challenge accordingly. For example, a school which will be in the Ofsted 'window' in the Spring term, when inspections resume, will be given targeted intervention according to the issues it needs to address.

## Education Outcomes – communication structure from September 2020



48. Throughout the lockdown period, we held twice weekly township Heads meetings, in which we answered any questions posed by schools and, where we needed to do so, referred these to the Department for Education via our React calls, passing the answers back to schools as soon as they were received.
49. Overall, schools felt well supported by the local authority and this will also drive a stronger working relationship with them in the months to come.
50. In terms of specific preparation for September, we have provided all our schools with a comprehensive risk assessment template, which is included here;

### **Appendix 2 – Coronavirus: RA Action Plan for potential opening from September 2020**

51. In addition, we have sent them a collation of advice from our internal services with respect to the guidance issued by the DfE.

### **Appendix 3 – LA commentary on September 2020 Guidance for Schools**

52. We have also sent all schools a letter highlighting our high expectations and asked that this is distributed to their parents and carers.

### **Appendix 4 – Letter to Parents and Carers – July 2020**

53. Finally, we are engaging with the Wellbeing for Education Return programme, which was announced by the government in August. This is intended to support pupils' anxiety when returning to school and is being led by the local authority's Education Psychology service. Each school will have a nominated staff member linked to the programme, which will enable co-ordination with their existing mental health leads.

## **Finance**

54. The programmes delivered by Dudley Performing Arts were funded from the Troubled Families budget, with a maximum cost of £20,000. The provision delivered by primary schools came from their own budgets and the Eduu.School online programme was provided free of charge by the Shireland Collegiate Academy Trust.

## **Law**

55. Pursuant to Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972, a local authority shall have power to do anything which is calculated to facilitate, or is conducive or incidental to, the discharge of any of their functions.

## **Equality Impact**

56. The summer provision was targeted at pupils who were deemed to be in need of support in order to return to school or college in September. They were identified by their schools and will be supported by these institutions going forwards.

## **Human Resources/Organisational Development**

57. There are no Human Resource/Organisational Development Implications arising from the contents of this report.

## **Commercial/Procurement**

58. There are no specific commercial opportunities arising from this report.

## **Health, Well Being and Safety**

59. All of our summer provision operated according to government guidance and we are supporting our schools to do the same when they return in September.



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**Helen Ellis**  
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the historic capital of the Black Country



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## **List of Appendices**

- Appendix 1 – Dudley College - Summer Programme aimed at new students
- Appendix 2 – Coronavirus: RA Action Plan for potential opening from September 2020
- Appendix 3 – LA commentary on September 2020 Guidance for Schools
- Appendix 4 – Letter to Parents and Carers – July 2020

DPA Summer video sent as separate link prior to this meeting.